PROPOSAL

To render effectual a

PLAN,

To remove the Nuisance of

Common Prostitutes

FROM THE

STREETS of this METROPOLIS;

To prevent

The INNOCENT from being seduced;

To provide

A decent and comfortable Maintenance for those whom Necessity or Vice hath already forced into that infamous Course of LIFE;

And to maintain and educate

Those CHILDREN of the Poor, who are either ORPHANS, or are *deserted* by wicked Parents.

To which is annexed,

A LETTER upon the Subject of Robberies, wrote in the year 1753.

By *SAUNDERS WELCH*,

One of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of *Middlesex*, and for the City and Liberty of *Westminster*.

LONDON:

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES Lord Viſc. *Folkſtone*,

PRESIDENT,

The Vice-Preſidents and Members

OF THE

SOCIETY for encouraging

ARTS and MANUFACTURES:

This humble Attempt in the Service of the PUBLIC is with all poſſible Humility dedicated

By their moſt reſpectful,

Moſt humble

And obedient Servant,

SAUNDERS WELCH.

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is with all possible Humility dedicated

By their most respectful

Most humble

And obedient Servant,

SAUNDERS WARNER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE publication of my thoughts upon the ſubject of providing for proſtitutes, &c. which at preſent ſeems to ingroſs the attention of ſo many worthy minds, ariſes not from either a deſire to diſtinguiſh myſelf, or the thirſt of applauſe; much leſs is it done to depreciate the labours of others, who have publiſhed their ſentiments upon the ſubject, particularly thoſe two worthy gentlemen, Mr. Dingley, and Mr. Hanway: I know I ſhall not offend them by offering my mite towards this great and benevolent deſign. So far are theſe gentlemen from being tenacious of their own opinions, or arbitrarily inforcing any particular plan as the ſtandard of perfection, that with a modeſty inſeparable from real merit, they deſire that the ſentiments of all who are inclined to write upon the ſubject, may be collected, as the beſt means of carrying their benevolent deſigns into execution; thereby preferring the public intereſt to the paltry conſideration of being eſteemed the projectors of a ſcheme.

My intention in the following eſſay, is to point out thoſe previous meaſures, which ſeem to me to be eſſentially neceſſary to a plan of this kind;

for, upon conſidering this matter with the utmoſt attention, it appears to me impracticable to render the deſign of public uſe without the aid of the legiſlature. The plan which has been ſome time publiſhed for a *public laundry*, and for which ſome ſubſcriptions have been raiſed, has not, I think, been ſo much attended to, either in its conſtruction, or in the method of executing it, as the ſubject deſerved. But this does not take away the merit of the attempt; neither ought the propoſing of a remedy for its defects to provoke envy or reſentment.

By this plan, bawdy-houſes are left untouched; they may ſtill ſeduce the Innocent, and continue their miſchief to ſociety with their uſual impunity; nor is any proviſion made to remove the nuſance of common proſtitutes from our ſtreets; except ſuch of them as ſhall voluntarily offer themſelves to the intended hoſpital: what thoſe will be, is eaſy to foreſee: no doubt, many will offer, when their bodies are corrupted by diſeaſes, and want and miſery has ſurrounded them, and rendered them dreadful objects to warn others from treading in the ſame wicked paths. But after they are received into the hoſpital, are cured of their diſeaſe, clothed, and their health and ſpirits retrieved by comfortable nouriſhment, is it not in their option to continue, or to demand their diſcharge? and without the interpoſition of the legiſlature, a ſubject cannot be impriſoned in this, any more than in any other hoſpital: they may therefore return to

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their former lewd practices, and render the charity little other, than a Lock hoſpital for curing venereal diſtempers.

The method of binding the orphan and deſerted children of the poor to the matron, as propoſed by the *Preſervatory and reformatory* plan, will appear impracticable, when it is conſidered that by our laws forty days continuance under an indenture of apprenticeſhip will give ſuch children an undoubted ſettlement in the pariſh where ſuch hoſpital is erected: but what pariſh will be able to ſupport the expence ſuch hoſpital muſt render it liable to? The proſtitutes are alſo, by the ſame plan, to be indentured apprentices to the matron, and *ſuch indentures to be dated back*; a propoſal which either ſlipped from the author, or he did not duly conſider the law, in as much as it implies fraud upon the face of it; as it is well known that ſuch indentures muſt be dated the day they are executed, and for the term of ſeven years at leaſt from the date, by the ſtatute of 5 Eliz. And ſurely the fathers of this intended charity will not ſuffer, or give their ſanction to a practice contrary to law.

But when this plan is further conſidered, with reſpect to the proſtitutes, it will appear productive of very evil conſequences to the Public, by increaſing their number, which is already too great in our ſtreets, and be the means of bawds ſupplying themſelves with girls more eaſily than at preſent.

It ſeems to me a miſtake to aſſert, that the

bawdy-houſes and ſtreets are furniſhed with proſtitutes from the children of the laborious Poor: this, I believe, is not the caſe of one in twenty of theſe unhappy creatures. The wrong turn of education of the children of thoſe in the next ſphere of life to labourers, is the plentiful ſource from whence the bagnios and bawdy-houſes are conſtantly ſupplied. And when diſeaſe and diſtemper render them incapable to ſee company (as it is termed) the ſtreets receive them. The maxim of the parents of theſe children is, to give them what they call a good education; and if Miſs happens to be pretty, her vanity is indulged by dreſs, &c. in hopes that ſhe may mend her fortune by captivating ſome rich gudgeon, or be qualified to wait upon a lady, or at leaſt to be a chamber-maid. The truth of this obſervation will ſufficiently appear, from the great difficulty of getting *ſervants for all work*; and the vaſt number of candidates for higher ſtations. Thus a uſeful education is ſacrificed, and the fond deluded parent lays the foundation of the child's deſtruction in pride and idleneſs: Unuſed to do the meaner offices of life, and unable to get a ſtation ſuitable to her education, pride united to neceſſity throws her as a miſtreſs into the arms of the firſt man who is willing to ſupport her in idleneſs and extravagance; or elſe ſhe falls an eaſy prey to the artifices of bawds.

Others, who have the good luck to be placed in ſtations ſuitable to their education, are ruined

by

by the falſe good-nature of their ſuperiors; how often is the lady's woman ſeen flaunting in her miſtreſs's left-off cloaths, and ridiculouſly affecting the airs of a woman of quality? Thus the mind is puffed up by vanity; that diſtinction and reſpectful diſtance which ſhould always ſubſiſt, is weakened if not deſtroyed; and the giddy girl becomes much fitter to be the miſtreſs of a man of quality, than a wife in her own ſtation. This might be eaſily remedied, if perſons of faſhion, at the ſame time that they give their cloaths to their ſervants, would interdict their wearing them. As the caſe ſtands at preſent, the ſervant who applies for a place, reſembles rather a viſiter to the perſon ſhe applies to, than one ſolliciting employment. Their finery induces them to inſiſt upon high wages, to the great injury of all ranks of people who ſtand in need of their ſervice; and inſtead of being of advantage to them, it involves them in difficulties from which they are unable to extricate themſelves; for the whole of their wages being generally ſpent in cloaths, if by accident they are thrown out of place, what recourſe have they for ſupport, but firſt to pawn or ſell their cloaths, and then to proſtitute their perſons?

The dread of the conſequences to which the diſſolute lives of proſtitutes unavoidably ſubject them, namely, univerſal contempt, diſeaſe and want, may, indeed, have its influence over the minds of many, whoſe inclinations lead them to give a looſe to their paſſions, or whoſe proneneſs to idle-

idleneſs tempts them to prefer a life of eaſe and debauchery, to that of induſtry and virtue. But, remove the dread of periſhing in the ſtreets by diſeaſe and want, and point out to them a certain *aſylum* at all events, not attended with the certain puniſhment of confinement, labour or correction; and will not the looſely-inclined be induced to liſt themſelves in the troops of proſtitutes, under this reflection, that let what will happen, there is a certain retreat for them: and thus the hoſpital, inſtead of redreſſing the evil, will actually increaſe it.

The author's motive for publiſhing this imperfect eſſay, is a ſincere deſire to ſerve the Public, by removing theſe and other objections to this charity, in a manner agreeable to the genius of our laws. The truth of this declaration he believes none will queſtion, who know either him or his views. To raiſe an honeſt fame by a faithful, active, and uncorrupt diſcharge of his truſt, is the utmoſt of his ambition; and he modeſtly hopes, that in near thirteen years execution of his public offices, at the riſque of his health, and hazard of his life, none can juſtly charge him with an arbitrary or corrupt action.

Mr.

Mr. WELCH's

PROPOSALS

To render effectual a PLAN *to remove the nuſance of* COMMON PROSTITUTES *from the ſtreets of this metropolis; to prevent the Innocent from being ſeduced, and to provide a decent and comfortable maintenance for thoſe whom neceſſity or vice have already forced into that infamous courſe of life; and to maintain and educate thoſe children of the Poor, who are either orphans, or are deſerted by wicked parents.*

PROSTITUTES ſwarm in the ſtreets of this metropolis to ſuch a degree, and bawdy-houſes are kept in ſuch an open and public manner, to the great ſcandal of our civil polity, that a ſtranger would think that ſuch practices, inſtead of being prohibited, had the ſanction of the legiſlature, and that the whole town was one general ſtew.

The complaint is as univerſal as the diſorder; the conſequences ariſing from it being ſenſibly felt by a general depravity of morals, a conſtant ſupply of ſharpers and robbers to infeſt our ſtreets, and a train of other evils, which na-

turally flow from minds depraved by luſt and enervated by debauchery.

Acts of lewdneſs were always puniſhable at the common law by indictment, and the general ſentence upon bawds is, fine, impriſonment, and pillory; and in this caſe the law puniſhes the wife equally with the huſband, as this offence relates to the government of the houſe, in which the wife has a principal ſhare.

But tho' the law always puniſhed this offence, the difficulty of conviction was very great, from the various arts and ſtratagems of the keepers of ſuch houſes, who ſometimes occupied the houſe in the name of an unknown perſon, entered appearances in the crown office, gave bail, bought off the evidence, and threatened the parties with miſchief to their perſons. Theſe and various other arts, joined to the delay of the law, and difficulty of proving the fact, ſo effectually diſheartened proſecutors, that bawds carried on their houſes as openly as if they had a licence for it; and thus with a kind of impunity went on, until their practices occaſioned a moſt dangerous riot, which threatened the peace of the whole town; for a ſailor going to one of theſe dens of luſt in the Strand, was there beat in a cruel manner and robbed: inſtead of applying to a magiſtrate, he carried his grievance, and applied for redreſs to his brother tars at Wapping, and they came in numbers and gutted the houſes of three of the bawds in the Strand, and made a bonfire of the goods before their doors. This

occa-

occaſioned a juſt, though unpopular execution: and the riot was with great difficulty and danger quelled by the then high-conſtable of Holborn diviſion.

This outrage induced the legiſlature to take the nuſance of bawdy-houſes into conſideration; and by the ſtatute of the 25th of his preſent Majeſty, it is enacted, "That, to encourage "proſecutions againſt perſons keeping bawdy-"houſes, gaming-houſes, or other diſorderly "houſes, the conſtable, on notice given him "in writing by any two inhabitants of the pa-"riſh paying ſcot and lot, of any perſon keep-"ing ſuch bawdy-houſes, &c. ſhall forthwith "go with them to a juſtice of the peace, and (on "their making oath that they do believe the "contents of ſuch notice to be true, and enter-"ing into a recognizance of twenty pounds each "to produce evidence of the offence) the con-"ſtable ſhall enter into a recognizance of thirty "pounds to proſecute the law with effect againſt "ſuch bawdy-houſe keeper, &c. at the next "ſeſſions or aſſizes; and the juſtice is required "to iſſue his warrant for bringing the accuſed "perſons before him, and ſhall bind them o-"ver to appear at the ſaid ſeſſion or aſſizes; "and ſhall alſo, if he think fit, demand and "take ſurety for their good behaviour in the "mean time.

"And if the conſtable ſhall neglect or re-"fuſe, upon ſuch notice, to go before a juſtice, "or to enter into recognizance, or ſhall be

" wilfully negligent in carrying on the profe-
" cution, he ſhall forfeit twenty pounds to each
" of the ſaid inhabitants.

" And on trial, any perſon may give evi-
" dence againſt the defendant, notwithſtanding
" his being a pariſhioner, or having entered in-
" to ſuch recognizance.

" And the conſtable ſhall be allowed all the
" reaſonable expences of the proſecution, to be
" aſcertained by two juſtices, and ſhall be paid
" the ſame by the overſeers of the poor: and
" if ſuch perſon be convicted, the overſeer ſhall
" alſo forthwith pay ten pounds to each of ſuch
" inhabitants, on pain of forfeiting double that
" ſum to the ſaid perſons.

" And no indictment of ſuch offence ſhall be
" removed by *certiorari*."

It was generally hoped that this act would effectually ſuppreſs, at leaſt, the open and bare faced bawdy-houſes; as the proceſs againſt them upon this ſtatute not only ſhortens the proceedings, but prevents that kind of chicanery, by which they had formerly eluded puniſhment; and alſo aſſigns a pecuniary reward to enforce its execution. The conſequence of this act was ſo much apprehended by the bawds of Covent Garden, that upon its commencement, and ſome little time after, they ſtopped their infamous practices. But unhappily the execution of this excellent law requires the information of two houſe-keepers who pay ſcot and lot in the pariſh where the offence is committed:

ted: and ſuch is the dread every man is under of incurring the odious name of informer, that few proſecutions have been commenced upon this act. This the bawds ſaw, and availed themſelves of it, by returning openly and publickly to their trade of proſtitution; and one of them, with an impudence agreeable to her calling, advertized in the news papers, that ſhe was removed from the piazzas, Covent-Garden, *to Bow-Street*, which ſhe alſo inſcribed under her ſign; and that ſtreet is now almoſt filled *with infamous houſes*.

To enumerate all the practices of bawds, the artful means by which innocence is decoyed into dens of luſt, and the meaſures practiſed to impriſon deluded girls; and render their return to induſtry and virtue impoſſible, ſo long as health and beauty render them proper objects of gainful proſtitution; would fill volumes.

It is well known that agents are conſtantly employed by bawds to attend the coming into town of waggons and other carriages; and when a young creature arrives, whoſe age, ſhape, and features are likely to raiſe deſire, ſhe is accoſted by ſome agent of corruption, with queſtions concerning her country, and cautions to be very careful of herſelf in this wicked town. After much inſinuating diſcourſe, the ſeducer takes a note where the deſtined victim lodges, and promiſes to inquire for a place for her. If the poor wench knows not of a lodging, the procureſs very luckily recollects a gentlewoman,

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who boards young ladies, and as her maid went away yeſterday, ſhe may go into her place without loſs of time or any expence. This ſpecious addreſs, gilded by a hypocritical pretence to goodneſs, has intrapped many hundred innocents. At her arrival at the bawd's, after ſtrict enquiry concerning character (which the procureſs ſatisfies by averring her knowledge of the girl and her friends) ſhe is hired; and from that moment the unhappy wretch is a priſoner, and either by perſuaſion, or force, ſoon becomes one of the family. When this is effected, her cloaths are taken from her as not elegant enough to ſee gentlemen in; and the bawd procures a flimſey ſuit of either ſecond-hand ſilk, or fine linen, for which a ſufficient price is ſet down; and if the wretch, tired of her wicked courſe of life, even but attempts to depart, a Marſhalſea-Court writ for the cloaths and board is directly executed upon her, and a priſon is her portion, where ſhe is kept until the bawd releaſes her, which is never done but upon a promiſe of implicit obedience; and the debt is immediately augmented by the coſts to ten pounds and upwards, and a note for that ſum is obtained from the unhappy girl, who is threatened with a county writ and Newgate in caſe of a ſecond elopement. Thus ſhe continues until diſeaſes occaſioned by a continued courſe of debauchery, diſqualifies her for houſes of coſtly leudneſs, and then ſhe is diſcharged as a miſerable outcaſt to infeſt the publick ſtreets.

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To give ſome idea of the horrid ſcenes carried on in theſe brothels, where robberies, drunkenneſs, curſing, ſwearing, and luſtful practices, of which modeſty permits not the bare mention, reign thro' all the waking hours, and recollection is totally buried in one continued riot, till diſeaſe awakens, and deſpair ſeizes upon the guilty mind, take one inſtance. An account being brought me, a few months ſince, that a murder had been committed at an infamous bawdy-houſe in Exeter-Street, I went to apprehend the bawd and her girls for examination; in one of the rooms lay a fine young creature exceſſive ill, who, inſtead of the language of repentance, vented horrid imprecations, and in a little time in deſpair threw herſelf out of the window, and ended her wretched being.

But to conſider the conſequences of this debauchery to the other ſex, what evils is it not productive of? Youth are debilitated, their conſtitutions are deſtroyed, and their morals corrupted: What kind of huſband is ſuch a man like to make a virtuous modeſt woman, if her unhappy fate throws her into his arms? * Add to this,

* If the number of women in the bills of mortality, whoſe ſole dependance is upon proſtitution, be computed at only 3000, a number which, I am convinced, falls far ſhort of the truth; and when it is duly conſidered that more than 2500 of theſe are rendered barren by their infamous courſe of life; thoſe who underſtand political arithmetic, muſt allow this to be no leſs a national than a moral evil; eſpecially if the thought be further purſued, and it be conſidered that

this, that the expence incurred by frequenting bawdy-houſes, is too great for moſt people who connect themſelves with whores and bawds; and yet when their fortunes are ruined by it, habit renders it extremely difficult to break this connexion: money muſt be had to ſupport the extravagance; the highway, or the ſtreets preſent themſelves; whoring is ſucceeded by robbery; and theſe houſes, as they are a certain nurſery of robbers, are alſo the concealers of them, and in them is riotouſly ſpent at night, what the violence of the day has procured. To ſuppreſs theſe houſes by puniſhing the keepers, the law ſeemed to be framed with wiſdom; but experience evinces that many things which appear demonſtrable in theory, often fail in practice. Thus it has happened to the ſtatute of the 25th of the king for the reaſon abovementioned.

My ſentiments of the evil ariſing from common proſtitutes, both to the public and themſelves;

that ſuch criminal converſe alienates the mind from matrimony; for it is hard to conceive that thoſe men who have contracted habits of converſing with every woman they like, will be brought to confine themſelves to one modeſt woman; and too many of them who do are ſo debilitated and weakened by diſeaſe and debauchery, that if any children are procreated by ſuch marriage, they are too generally weakly and infected with the *Evil* and other diſeaſes, from the corrupted ſtate of the father's conſtitution. And ſurely the maxim that a reformed rake makes the beſt huſband muſt be falſe, unleſs it can be proved, that it is a benefit to the fair ſex to have, inſtead of a vigorous conſtitution, the dregs of a broken one.

ſelves; I ſet forth in the year 1753, by command of a noble duke in a very high ſtation, in a letter to his grace, in which was the following paſſage: Thoſe who have had the ſame opportunities, which the office I then held gave me, of ſeeing the miſery of theſe unhappy wretches, and have attended to the conſequences of their actions, well know that much more might have been ſaid with the ſtricteſt regard to truth.

" Common proſtitutes are another cauſe of " robberies. Little needs be ſaid to prove that " theſe wretches, who are lurking at every " corner of our ſtreets, are an intolerable nu- " ſance: Here I would be underſtood to mean, " thoſe unhappy creatures, who, having neither " a houſe to ſhelter them, nor protector to ſup- " port them, are under a neceſſity of wander- " ing up and down the ſtreets to make a prey " of the unwary apprentice, and intoxicated " huſband. The bodies of theſe women are " generally a complication of diſorders, their " language made up of dreadful execrations, and " their behaviour infamous beyond compariſon. " Theſe wretches by their open proſtitution " make ſin cheap. By theſe the apprentice is " ſeduced to criminal converſe, which generally " ends in pilfering from the maſter: Detection " follows, and if his maſter has the humanity " to diſcharge him without proſecution, repu- " tation being deſtroyed, it is odds but he aſſo-

" ciates

" ciates himſelf with the wretch who ſeduced
" him, who rarely fails to put him upon rob-
" bery for her ſupport. Theſe wretches can-
" not be ſaid only to corrupt youth, but like a
" virulent contagion precipitate the body into
" immediate deſtruction. Great numbers of
" theſe have been apprehended upon private
" ſearches, and have been ſent, ſome to Bride-
" well to hard labour, others, too diſeaſed for
" puniſhment, to hoſpitals: Little good, if any,
" has aroſe from theſe; for upon being diſ-
" charged from one, and cured at the other,
" having no means of recommendation, or ho-
" neſt method of ſupporting themſelves, ne-
" ceſſity, united to a mind abandoned to de-
" bauchery, drives them to their former prac-
" tices for ſupport. Hard indeed is that duty
" whoſe tendency is uſeleſs ſeverity; and where
" puniſhment only prevents for the time it ope-
" rates, but hardly ever produced one reforma-
" tion. I have often wiſhed with an aching heart,
" that there was among the noble charities,
" which diſtinguiſh this age in hoſpitals for al-
" moſt every human calamity, one inſtituted
" by the legiſlature to receive and provide la-
" bour for theſe true objects of compaſſion, as
" well as deteſtation. Poſſibly the making
" the army cloaths and linen might be intro-
" duced, whereby theſe unhappy fellow-crea-
" tures might be reſcued from diſeaſe and mi-
" ſery, and inſtead of being a nuſance to the
" publick,

" publick, become uſeful to it, and prevent the " ruin of thouſands*."

As acts of bawdry are by the common law deemed breaches of the peace, and bring the actors of them under the denomination of perſons of evil fame; ſo thoſe who offer themſelves for proſtitution, juſtly fall under the deſcription of looſe, idle, and diſorderly perſons, and come within the cognizance of the civil magiſtrate; and upon proof upon oath of the fact, are liable to be committed to priſon as perſons of evil fame, for want of ſureties for their future good behaviour; or, what is more generally practiſed in this caſe, to Bridewell *in execution* for a time not exceeding one kalendar month to hard labour. When ſearch warrants have been granted, founded upon the ſtatute of the 17th of his preſent majeſty, great numbers of theſe unhappy creatures have been apprehended, and committed *in execution to Bridewell for a month to hard labour*; but the puniſhment of the far greater number is generally but of ſhort duration: thoſe who are proper furniture for a bawdy-houſe ſeldom remain twen-

 ty-four

* Since the writing of the above letter, the evil has increaſed: proſtitutes of a higher rank, and gayer turn, ſome from bawdy-houſes, others who have private lodgings of their own, publickly ply in the Strand and Fleet-Street at noon day; and except ſome parliamentary remedy be applied to ſtop the evil, it will not only be impoſſible for modeſt women to walk the ſtreets, as theſe harlots take every opportunity to affront and inſult them; but an univerſal debauchery will alſo ſpread among our youth.

ty-four hours in priſon; for by *bail* and other means the bawds get them releaſed, and they return directly and commit the ſame offence for which they were impriſoned: But thoſe whom diſeaſe and poverty have rendered friendleſs, are left to pine and languiſh out their month's impriſonment under the ſeverity of the law. This is a fact well known by the gentlemen in the commiſſion of the peace who attend goal-deliveries, and the truth of it will be demonſtrated by the annals of Bridewell. At the laſt general goal-delivery, upon a commitment of this kind, wherein many names were inſerted, only two poor wretches, almoſt naked, remained; and upon being aſk'd by a gentleman who does honour to the commiſſion, how they came not to be diſcharged as well as the reſt? one of them in a feeble languiſhing tone of voice anſwered, *Becauſe we had no friends*; upon which the court diſcharged them.

It will readily be ſeen that the law has not provided a remedy adequate to the miſchief theſe unhappy women bring upon themſelves and ſociety; and that an amendment of the law is neceſſary before this flagrant evil can be redreſſed*.

The

* The effect which open proſtitution has upon unwary youth is but too well known. Thouſands have been tempted and ſeduced, to their utter ruin, in their paſſage thro' the ſtreets where theſe infamous houſes abound; into whoſe minds lewdneſs would not have found its way, had not the temptation been placed in this barefaced manner before their eyes.

The reformation of abuſes long practiſed with a kind of impunity, requires good ſenſe and judgment matured by experience. Zeal too often miſleads the underſtanding of the reformer. Great care ought to be taken, that while we haſtily remove one evil, we do not render the remedy worſe than the diſeaſe by introducing a greater. The preſent depravity requires delicacy in it's management. The imagination of the writer is not ſo filled with the idea of reforming that he ſhould ſuppoſe it practicable totally to ſuppreſs whoreing; the conſequence of which, were it poſſible to effect it, might be the encreaſe of a horrid vice too rife already, though the bare thought of it ſtrikes the mind with horror; poſſibly the having waſte ground, may prevent the *razing the ſanctuary and pitching our evils there*, as our excellent poet expreſſes it. But certainly there is a wide difference between vice hiding its head and ſkulking in corners, and vice expoſing its face at noon-day. What idea muſt foreigners have of our policy, when in almoſt every ſtreet they ſee women publickly expoſing themſelves at the windows and doors of bawdy-houſes, like beaſts in a market for publick ſale, with language, dreſs, and geſture too offenſive to mention; and find themſelves tempted (it may be ſaid aſſaulted) in the ſtreets by a hundred women between Temple-Bar and Charing-Croſs, in terms ſhocking to the ear of modeſty. To remove this publick proſtitution, reſtore decency to our ſtreets, provide

comfortably by uſeful labour for unhappy wretches now ſunk in luſt and diſeaſe, and by preventive meaſures, to ſecure others from falling a prey to bawds and panders, the author modeſtly offers his ſentiments, to be improved by others, whoſe leiſure hours may be well employed in this benevolent undertaking.

In order to render the law leſs difficult in the execution, and more effectual for the ſuppreſſion of common bawdy-houſes, and thereby to prevent the innocent from being ſeduced, to remove the nuſance of common proſtitutes from the ſtreets, to provide a comfortable maintenance for thoſe who ſhall be deſirous to quit that infamous courſe of life, and to reclaim thoſe who ſhall be apprehended in common bawdy-houſes, or in the public ſtreets, the following outline of an act of Parliament is moſt humbly offered to thoſe of greater abilities and in ſuperior ſtation, to be by them altered and amended, as they ſhall think proper.

Let it be enacted, THAT the keepers of common bawdy-houſes, their agents, and ſervants acting in ſuch bawdy-houſes, being convicted thereof, ſhall be tranſported for the term of ſeven years, according to the laws made for tranſporting felons; excepting thoſe ſervants or agents who ſhall voluntarily offer themſelves to give evidence in his Majeſty's behalf, and be accepted by the juſtice before whom the charge

ſhall be made; ſuch evidences to be impriſoned until the parties ſo charged ſhall be tried *.

THAT every juſtice of the peace, in his reſpective juriſdiction, be impowered to convene before him the conſtables or any other peace or pariſh officers of the pariſh or place where he ſhall ſuſpect any bawdy-houſes to be kept, and upon their oaths † enquire of the truth of ſuch ſuſpicion; and if ſuch ſuſpicion be confirmed by the oath of any peace or other pariſh officer, ſuch juſtice of the peace ſhall be impowered to enter into ſuch ſuſpected bawdy-houſe, and upon his own view apprehend the occupier of ſuch houſe, together with the ſervants or agents there acting, and commit them to priſon for a time not exceeding three days; when the parties ſo committed ſhall be brought up before the ſaid juſtice for further examination; and the ſaid juſtice ſhall be impowered to ſummon before him ſuch perſon or perſons whom he ſhall deem to be material evidence in his Majeſty's behalf, to prove the truth of the fact againſt ſuch bawds,

* When it is duly conſidered, that our law tranſports for very ſmall ſums feloniouſly taken, tho' perhaps real neceſſity was the motive of the crime; it is hoped that the ſubjecting of theſe wretches, who are the inſtigators to highway robberies and theft, to the ſame puniſhment, will not be deemed too harſh and ſevere, as there ſeems hardly any proportion in the offences with reſpect to the Public.

† As it might be thought too great a power to enable the juſtice to enter any houſe ſolely upon his own ſuſpicion, to obviate this objection the circumſtance of an oath is here ſet down. The power given to convene proper perſons to be examined, is agreeable to our laws.

bawds, their agents, and ſervants; and if ſuch pariſh or peace officers, or ſuch perſons whom the juſtice ſhall deem material evidence, ſhall neglect or refuſe to appear before the juſtice according to the ſummons; then ſuch juſtice ſhall iſſue his warrant to bring ſuch perſons before him: and if the parties ſo convened and ſummoned, or brought before him by warrant as aforeſaid, ſhall refuſe to be examined upon oath touching the premiſes (except the people called Quakers) the juſtice ſhall be impowered to commit ſuch perſons ſo refuſing to anſwer, to priſon, there to reman until ſeſſions, or until they ſhall ſignify to the juſtice that they are willing to be examined as the law directs.

AND if upon ſuch further examination the juſtice ſhall deem the evidence before him ſufficient to put the parties ſo charged to their trials, then the juſtice ſhall take the informations of the evidences, and bind over the conſtable in a recognizance of thirty pounds to proſecute the law with effect at the next or general quarter ſeſſions of the peace; and the other parties in a recognizance of twenty pounds each, to appear and give evidence*. And if the conſtable ſhall be wilfully negligent in carrying on the proſecution, he ſhall forfeit forty pounds to the poor of the pariſh where the offence is committed, to be accounted for as other monies raiſed for the uſe

* This clauſe being founded upon the ſtatute of the 25th of his preſent Majeſty, needs neither comment to explain it, nor reaſons to inforce it.

uſe of the poor are accounted for. And all charges accruing to the conſtable in carrying on ſuch proſecution, and a reaſonable allowance for his time and trouble, being ſettled by two juſtices of the peace in or near the pariſh where the offence is committed, ſhall be paid him by the overſeers of the poor of the pariſh where the offence is committed, out of the monies collected, or to be collected, for the poor, within forty days after the ſervice of the ſaid order of the juſtices (which ſaid allowance ſhall be allowed ſuch overſeers in paſſing their accounts) upon penalty of forfeiting double the ſum mentioned in the ſaid order, to be levied by warrant of diſtreſs under the hands and ſeals of the two juſtices who ſigned the ſaid order. And ſuch juſtice ſhall commit the parties ſo charged to the county goal, there to remain and take their trials at the next general or quarter ſeſſions of the peace to be held for the county in which the offence ſhall be committed.

THAT upon the apprehending any proſtitute in the ſtreet, or in any bawdy-houſe, and the fact being proved, the juſtice before whom ſhe is brought ſhall take the examination of ſuch proſtitute, upon her oath, touching the place of her legal ſettlement, and tranſmit the ſame to the next general or quarter ſeſſions, and commit ſuch proſtitute to † Bridewell, there to remain until the

† A particular ward might be appropriated in the hoſpital, for the reception of the committed proſtitutes, until the next ſeſſions, and the goals have nothing to do with them.

the next ſeſſions, when the priſoner ſhall be brought into court, together with her commitment; and, if the fact charged upon her be proved to the ſatisfaction of the court, the ſeſſions ſhall have power to commit her to the hoſpital hereafter named for any time not exceeding years, nor leſs than one year; and with the commitment annex the examination touching her ſettlement taken before the committing juſtice; which commitment and examination ſhall be forthwith filed, and kept in ſuch hoſpital for the purpoſes hereafter mentioned. And for the future ſuch proſtitutes as ſhall be found plying in the public ſtreets, or other public places, ſhall and may be apprehended by any perſon who ſhall be witneſs of the fact, without any proceſs, and be delivered over directly into the cuſtody of any conſtable, or other peace officer; and ſuch conſtable or peace officer ſhall be required to receive the charge, and immediately convey ſuch proſtitutes before ſome juſtice of the peace, to be dealt with as before mentioned†.

The

† This clauſe is founded upon the ſtatute of the 17th of his preſent Majeſty, commonly called the vagrant act, and it will be readily admitted, that common proſtitutes are greater offenders againſt the public peace, than thoſe who through real want ſeek alms in the ſtreets; for which offence they are liable to be committed until ſeſſions, and after that for a time not exceeding ſix months to hard labour, and ſubject to be whipped at ſuch times and places as the court ſhall order.

THE means here pointed out for ſuppreſſing lewdneſs, it is hoped, will produce the effect deſired, namely, the putting a ſtop to the open and public traffick of bawds in houſes ſolely appropriated to that purpoſe, by expoſing women at their windows and doors, as tradeſmen do their goods for ſale.

But as a regulation of this ſort muſt of courſe reduce a great number of unhappy young women, who now live only by proſtitution, to abſolute diſtreſs,

It's humbly propoſed for their relief,

That a voluntary ſubſcription be opened for erecting an hoſpital for the reception of Proſtitutes, and the orphan and deſerted children of the Poor, by the name of

That every perſon ſubſcribing fifty pounds at once, be a governor for life; and every perſon contributing five pounds *per ann.* be an annual governor ſo long as ſuch ſubſcription is continued.

That when a fund is raiſed ſufficient for that purpoſe, application be made to parliament to procure an act for the purpoſes beforementioned, and for incorporating the ſaid governors, by the name of *the governors and ſupporters of the hoſpital for the reception and reformation of common proſtitutes, and for the reception of the orphans and deſerted children of the poor*; and that ſuch governors be inveſted with power to receive, confine, put to labour, and provide neceſſaries for, ſuch proſtitutes as ſhall be committed to the

ſaid hoſpital by the general or quarter ſeſſions of the peace; and to receive and provide for ſuch penitent proſtitutes as ſhall voluntarily offer themſelves to the ſaid hoſpital; under ſuch terms and reſtrictions as ſhall be from time to time ſettled and agreed to between the governors of the ſaid hoſpital and ſuch penitent proſtitutes: And to receive, maintain, educate, and apprentice out, or place out in ſervices, the orphan and deſerted children of the Poor, according to ſuch rules and orders as ſhall from time to time be made by the governors of the ſaid hoſpital.

And that the ſaid governors, or the majority of them, ſhall have power to make ſuch rules and orders for the better governing and regulating ſuch hoſpital, as from time to time to them ſhall ſeem proper.

That in caſe the ſaid committed proſtitutes ſhould at any time ſo encreaſe in number, that convenient room could not be found for them in the ſaid hoſpital, or the income of the hoſpital be inſufficient to ſupport them: That then and in ſuch caſes the ſaid governors, or any three of them, certifying the ſame to the next court of general or quarter ſeſſions, and producing the commitment of ſeſſions of ſuch proſtitutes, and the examinations thereto annexed, touching the ſettlements of thoſe proſtitutes, whoſe ſettlements ſhall be at the greateſt diſtance from this metropolis, the ſaid court of ſeſſions ſhall paſs ſuch proſtitutes to their legal ſettlements in the ſame form and manner as rogues

and

and vagabonds are directed to be paſſed by the ſtatute of the 17th of his preſent Majeſty†.

And if ſuch proſtitutes ſhall, after being ſo paſſed, return back, and be convicted at the general or quarter ſeſſions of committing the like offence, ſuch proſtitutes ſhall be tranſported for ſeven years*.

That if any proſtitute, who ſhall have been ſo committed as aforeſaid, manifeſt an abandoned diſpoſition, by frequent ſwearing, curſing, indecent behaviour, or by being guilty of frequent miſdemeanors, by refuſing to work the hours appointed by the governors, or being idle and negligent in their reſpective labour, quarrelling, or making waſte in her work or proviſions: That then it ſhall and may be lawful to and for ſuch governors, or any three of them, to cauſe ſuch woman to be brought before them at their next meeting; and, the facts being proved, the

† The paſſing of proſtitutes to their ſettlement, with the penalty of tranſportation upon their return, will not only thin the ſtreets of theſe wretches, but prevent the hoſpital from being over-charged, either in reſpect of the income, or room in the houſe: and the terror of the puniſhment, it is hoped, will alſo deter others from the purſuit of ſuch practices.

* When every ſtep taken for the reformation of theſe wretches proves inffectual, no exception can ſurely be taken to their being removed, from being a nuſance to the Public, and bringing deſtruction upon themſelves, to a place where their iniquities cannot be practiſed, and where they will be compelled to be uſeful; ſuch proſtitutes being cured, if they have the venereal diſtemper upon them, before they are ſent abroad.

governors ſhall have power to order her reaſonable corporal puniſhment immediately, or to mulct her in her meals until the next meeting, and alſo place ſome badge or mark of ignominy on her for a week, to be removed, or continued, as her behaviour ſhall deſerve.

That if any woman, after receiving ſuch reaſonable correction or puniſhment as aforeſaid, ſhall continue her abandoned behaviour, ſo as to appear to the governors to be irreclaimable by the reaſonable correction ordered by them at the weekly board; ſuch woman ſhall, upon the fact being certified to the next general or quarter ſeſſions, under the hands of three of the governors, be paſſed in ſuch manner and form as rogues and vagabonds are paſſed, to her ſettlement, as aforeſaid; and if after ſhe ſhall be ſo paſſed, ſhe ſhall return, and commence common proſtitute, upon a proof thereof at the next general or quarter ſeſſions, ſuch woman ſhall be tranſported for ſeven years.

That if any woman ſo committed and confined in the ſaid hoſpital as aforeſaid, ſhall endeavour or attempt to break the ſaid hoſpital, with an intent to eſcape therefrom; or if any other perſon or perſons ſhall break into the ſaid hoſpital, with intent to reſcue any perſon who ſhall be there under confinement, or ſhall attempt to reſcue any perſon who ſhall be in cuſtody by virtue of this act, and conveying either before a magiſtrate, or to this hoſpital, or ſhall aſſault

aſſault any officer in the diſcharge of his duty relative to this hoſpital, or who ſhall be conveying ſuch offenders as aforeſaid; ſhe, he or they, ſhall be deemed offenders againſt law and the public peace; and the court before whom ſuch offenders ſhall be tried, ſhall, in caſe ſhe, he or they be convicted of any of the ſaid offences, order ſuch offender or offenders to be fined and impriſoned, or to be put in the pillory, or publicly whipped, or to be tranſported (as aforeſaid) for the term of ſeven years, as the court in which any ſuch offender or offenders ſhall be convicted, ſhall think fit and order*.

That if any perſon or perſons ſhall wilfully and maliciouſly ſet fire to, or attempt to ſet fire to, or otherwiſe deſtroy the ſaid hoſpital, or any part thereof, he, ſhe, or they, being convicted thereof, ſhall be adjudged guilty of felony, and ſhall ſuffer death as felons, without benefit of clergy†.

By the method here pointed out of ſtriking at the root of the evil, and uniting this noble in-

* This hoſpital will have few ſervants to conduct it, as the proſtitutes will be employed alternately to do the whole houſhold work, this clauſe is therefore but a neceſſary ſecurity to protect the matron, and the reſt of the ſervants from any attempt of violence, either from thoſe confined in the hoſpital, or any perſon without, with whom they may have been connected.

† As the lives of numbers of people may be involved in ſuch diabolical act, no puniſhment can be too ſevere upon the perpetrators of it.

ſtitution

ſtitution with an amendment of the police of this metropolis, the governors will be enabled to purſue their plan with effect; and poſſibly time may remove the nuſance of common proſtitutes from the ſtreets; and by decreaſing the objects intended to be relieved, leave the governors more at liberty to extend their benevolence to the orphan and deſerted children of the poor, whoſe caſe is thus briefly repreſented in the before-mentioned letter wrote in 1753.

" Another cauſe of robberies I apprehend to " be the want of a proviſion for maintaining and " educating in good principles aud habits of " induſtry, the children of the poor.

" The children of the poor may be reduced " to three claſſes.

" *1ſt*, The families of the Induſtrious, too " numerous for their parents to maintain with " decency, much leſs provide for their educa- " tion in good principles, or labour ſuitable to " their tender age.

" *2dly*, The children of the extravagant diſ- " ſolute Poor. Theſe are indeed miſerable; " for ſo far are theſe wretches from taking " proper care of their offſpring, that they them- " ſelves encourage and inſtruct their children in " the pilfering trade, and are ready to receive " whatever they ſteal.

" *3dly*, Orphans of the Poor, left deſtitute " and friendleſs from the age of ſeven years

to

" to that of fourteen: Unnoticed, and unre-
" lieved by pariſh officers, they are left to
" wander under the cruel alternative of beg-
" ging, ſtealing, or ſtarving.

" What other conſequence can ariſe to the
" Public, from children turned adrift in a
" town wicked as this, with minds untutored,
" and pinched by neceſſity, but a conſtant ſup-
" ply of pick-pockets, pilferers from ſhops,
" and inſtruments in the hands of greater vil-
" lains, to lie concealed in houſes till the dead
" of night, and then let them in to plunder,
" perhaps murder an innocent family? Chil-
" dren thus bred up in ſloth and naſtineſs un-
" til ſeven years of age, at the time when edu-
" cation and habits of induſtry ſhould com-
" mence, become thieves by neceſſity; and if
" they are bold and daring, if they eſcape
" tranſportation, or being cut off by diſeaſe and
" rottenneſs, turn ſtreet robbers, and perhaps
" murderers. The ſacred name of God is no
" otherwiſe known to them, but by dreadful
" execrations; and Religion is firſt taught them
" by the ordinary of Newgate.

" If I am rightly informed, in our manu-
" factory towns children ceaſe to be a burthen
" to their parents at leſs than ſeven years of
" age: And ſure little need be ſaid of the ne-
" ceſſity and utility of ſome hoſpital to receive
" theſe innocents, educate and employ them;

when,

" when, inſtead of their being a dreadful nu-
" ſance to ſociety, as they now are, ſuch a
" foundation would prove a ſeminary of excel-
" lent ſervants to the publick."

By this ſtate of the children of the Poor, it will readily be ſeen that the writer regarded the male part only, as the then proper object of his diſquiſition; and indeed, boys left orphans, or totally deſerted by their parents and friends, are much likelier to become thieves at that age, than the girls are to become whores; and the evils brought upon ſociety by them, more to be dreaded: To extend this charity to the girls only, will therefore be a partial proviſion; humanity and good policy claim the like protection for theſe unhappy innocent boys, who may ſoon be taught to labour in ſome ſimple manufacture, and apprenticed out afterwards to ordinary tradeſmen, artificers, &c. or placed out to huſbandmen in the country, where hands are greatly wanting; as the girls may be to middling tradeſmen, artificers, &c. as ſoon as they are qualified by their age, ſtature, and abilities.

Thoſe who are well acquainted with the laborious poor in this town, and their mannner of behaviour, know that the generality of them do ſeldom extend their labour beyond what is abſolutely neceſſary to the bare ſupport of their family; and this is the true reaſon why we encounter

counter the children of the Poor at a diſtance from the metropolis, clean, and their cloaths however ordinary, whole and decent; while thoſe in town are too generally ragged, and hurt the eye by their filthy appearance; altho' the parents of the firſt can earn but ſix ſhillings a week, and thoſe of the latter are able, were they willing, to earn fifteen. To take in the children of the Poor indiſcriminately, might not only tend to weaken parental affection, a circumſtance well worthy ſerious conſideration; but it might alſo tend to increaſe that general idleneſs univerſally complained of by maſters in moſt manufactures. Moderate dearneſs of proviſions, however it may affect individuals, is poſſibly far from being a publick detriment; for as it increaſes the national ſtock by additional labour and induſtry, ſo it alſo ſtops the current of exceſs and debauchery; and a frugal uſe of the neceſſaries of life as naturally tends to their increaſe, as wanton profuſeneſs leads to ſcarcity.

But the innocent orphans and deſerted children of both ſexes extend their arms, and particularly call upon the Public to be their common parent, and reſcue them from miſery and deſtruction; Heaven pleads their cauſe; and humanity and good policy unite to demand protection for them. By making this hoſpital a place of general reception of chil-

dren, we might, by graſping at too much, defeat the noble deſign; whereas by prudently beginning with theſe deſtitute orphans, the charity may ſoon be carried into execution; and if room be found, and the fund prove ſufficient, the governors may extend their patronage to the children of the diſſolute.

There is an inſtitution of this kind at Paris, the utility of which has been thoroughly experienced.

This hoſpital was founded about the year 1202 by two friars, for the reception of poor paſſengers, and continued under their, and other direction, until the year 1545; but abuſes having crept in, "the "parliament obliged the paſſengers to re- "move, and put in their ſtead the children "of the poor of both ſexes, born in Paris "in lawful wedlock; to give them educa- "tion, and teach them a trade. This hoſ- "pital conſiſts of 100 beds for boys, and "thirty-ſix for girls, who have different a- "partments; their cloathing a blue uniform. "The youngeſt are taught to read and write; "and as ſoon as they are ſix or ſeven years "of age, they are taught ſome trade in the "hoſpital, all ſorts of trades having been ſet "up in this hoſpital. And, in order to en- "courage tradeſmen to come and exerciſe "their trades here, and to teach the chil-

"dren,

" dren, the parliament declared, that ſuch " journeymen as ſhould have taught theſe " poor children ſix years in this hoſpital, " ſhould have the freedom without any coſt " or trial *. And thoſe children who " ſhould be arrived to the age of 25, and " have taught others during ſix years ſince " they were out of their apprenticeſhip, " ſhould have the ſame privilege. This " wiſe eſtabliſhment has procured the city " of Paris a vaſt number of very able artifi- " cers of all ſorts, who might otherwiſe have " paſſed their lifetime in a ſhameful and " burthenſome poverty [the author might " have added, perhaps turn'd robbers and " murderers.] This hoſpital is governed by " five eminent perſons choſen by the parlia- " ment out of ten, whom the attorney- " general preſents †."

But if a plan of this nature ſhould not be approved, a correſpondence might be ſettled with the manufacturing towns of Birmingham, Sheffield, Mancheſter, &c. for transferring the children, at a proper age or ſtature, from this hoſpital, to the artificers and mechanics of thoſe towns, who ſhould apply for apprentices.

* The author has omitted to mention whether the freedom is of Paris only, or extends to the whole kingdom.

† General Syſtem of Geography, Vol. I. p. 48.

The *Preſervatory* Plan, it is apprehended, is too confined in limiting the objects for this hoſpital to children of ſeven years of age and upwards. It is a melancholy fact that many boys are now thieves and pilferers under that age: And Covent-Garden, St. Giles's, and other places, afford too many inſtances of girls, not yet ſeven years old, curſing, ſwearing, and making uſe of obſcene expreſſions. If therefore the girls even ſo young are to be uncorrupt in their morals to intitle them to be candidates for this charity, it is much to be feared that thoſe who need it moſt will be excluded, and the hoſpital be but thinly inhabited. The younger the children are admitted, the greater the proſpect of their future happineſs will be; nor poſſibly would it be attended with any material inconvenience, if ſuch children as ſhould be rejected by the Foundling-houſe, on account of age, were here admitted, upon proof before the governors, that ſuch children were orphans, or deſerted by their parents or friends*.

It is not my intention, nor indeed, although I have been long converſant in the management of hoſpitals, is it within the compaſs of my

* It will readily be ſeen that great care ought to be taken, that this hoſpital be not made uſe of to eaſe the work-

my abilities, to preſcribe a ſyſtem for the interiour government of this charity. Rules and orders muſt be made as incidents ariſe. But a few miſcellaneous hints will, I hope, be rather interpreted a deſire to promote this excellent charity, than an impertinent dictating to a ſet of gentlemen who intend to dedicate a part of their time to the management of it; more eſpecially as a plan has already been ſketched out by Mr. Dingley, of whoſe abilities I have a far better opinion, than of my own.

To the labour * propoſed by Mr. Dingley's plan, I beg leave to add, that of making the ſoldiers

workhouſes of the ſeveral pariſhes of the children whom, their legal ſettlements are known, and whom the law has ſufficiently provided for. But as numbers of vagabonds, as well as induſtrious Iriſh poor, ſwarm in this town, and moſt of the Iriſh are papiſts, the providing for the orphan and deſerted children of theſe, and bringing them up in the proteſtant religion, will render them uſeful and loyal ſubjects, and ſtrengthen the proteſtant cauſe.

* It deſerves ſerious conſideration what kind of labour is moſt proper to be introduced into this hoſpital: The governors will, no doubt, be careful that while they relieve one ſet of objects, they do not bring diſtreſs and miſery upon others by depriving them of the means of ſupport. The laundry plan is obviouſly productive of this ill conſequence, by ruining a great number of people whoſe ſole ſupport is waſhing linen. But as the execution of Mr. Dingley's plan is in the hands of a body of merchants, the moſt reſpectable in the kingdom,

ſoldiers cloaths and linen; as this work will not only be certain, but ſo eaſy, that the moment a woman comes into the hoſpital, ſhe will be capable of earning more than the expence of her apparel and maintenance: and the contractors for cloathing the army, would gladly embrace the opportunity of having their work done here, as they would be not only certain of having the cloaths finiſh'd in due time to perform their contracts, but alſo the injury they ſuſtain by their cloaths being made away with, by giving them out to numbers of bad people, would be prevented. Upon a ſurvey of the expence of the poor in St. Giles's workhouſe, in a year when the price of proviſions was at a medium with a number of years before, I found that, all expences included, the charge was under two ſhillings a week a head: And of my own knowledge, a woman who is but tolerably quick at her needle, may earn upwards of three ſhillings and ſixpence per week at ſoldiers work.

It ſeems neceſſary that the hoſpital for the proſtitutes ſhould conſiſt of two parts; one for the reception of penitent proſtitutes, which

dom, it is not to be doubted, that their extenſive knowledge in trade will enable them to introduce ſome new manufacture into the hoſpital, whereby the nation may be benefited, and no individual hurt.

which in good policy ſhould be made rather the object of deſire, as an agreeable retreat from temptation, than of dread, as a place of puniſhment. It ſhould be appropriated to thoſe only upon whoſe minds Grace ſhould work a change, and induce to forſake their evil courſes; or others who might be deſirous to quit their miſerable ſituation on account of temporal miſchiefs attending it. The other part of the hoſpital may be for thoſe apprehended in their crimes, who, though they excite commiſeration as diſtreſſed fellow-creatures, ought to be dealt with in a different manner, ſo as to render their confinement in the eyes of the vulgar a kind of puniſhment. This would prevent ſome from deviating from virtue, and induce the penitent who might be ſincerely deſirous to be kept from temptation, voluntarily to preſent herſelf to be received into this hoſpital as a place of retreat from contempt and miſery, and thereby avoid the ſhame of being apprehended and expoſed in a court of juſtice, and abiding it's ſentence. Any communication between this part and that allotted for the reception of the orphan and deſerted children, ought to be rendered abſolutely impracticable.

The governors being ſatisfied of the ſincerity of the penitent proſtitutes, may appoint thoſe whoſe abilities may qualify them for the

the office, to be ſub-matrons of the committed proſtitutes wards, for the more orderly and regular government thereof, under ſuch regulations as from time to time ſhall be made by the governors; or the governors may transfer them as ſervants into the Orphan-Hoſpital. The repentant proſtitutes might alſo be permitted to do any kind of work they might be qualified for; and after one year's continuance in the hoſpital might be ſuffered to depart upon preſenting a petition to the board; or ſooner than a year, if they could be provided for to the ſatisfaction of the governors; the governors giving them ſuch certificate as their conduct and behaviour ſhould deſerve.

Upon the commitment or admiſſion of ſuch proſtitutes to the hoſpital, an uniform cloathing for thoſe committed might be ſettled by the governors, and another of better materials for the penitents; and the cloaths they come to the hoſpital in, if they be worth preſerving, be got up in a decent manner, and label'd with the perſon's name, and ranged in a warehouſe in the order of their admiſſion, except ſuch cloaths as the governors ſhould deem too fine for their ſtation, which might be ſold for the beſt price, and an account of the produce of ſuch cloaths be entered into a book, together with the neat produce of the labour

of

of every proſtitute during the time of her continuance in the hoſpital.

Twice every year a general account of the expence of the hoſpital might be made up, in order to aſcertain the expence of every individual; and the expence of ſuch individual be entered on the debtor ſide of her account.

After the continuance of any woman in the hoſpital for one year, upon the modeſt and virtuous demeanour and induſtrious conduct of ſuch woman, and upon application of her parents or friends; or of any houſe-keeper, who upon enquiry ſhould be found to be of ſufficient credit, and in want of a ſervant; if ſuch friends declare, that they will forgive the paſt offences of ſuch woman, and will provide for her; or if ſuch houſe-keeper will receive ſuch woman as a ſervant; in either of thoſe caſes the governors might diſcharge ſuch woman.

Upon the diſcharge of ſuch woman, her cloaths, or, if ſold, the neat produce of them ſhould be returned to her, together with whatever balance might be due upon her account; and a certificate given her, under the hands of three or more of the governors, of her conduct and behaviour during the time of her being in the hoſpital.

Every proſtitute, whether repentant or committed, who ſhould be placed in a ſervice from this hoſpital, and ſhould continue

one whole year in ſuch ſervice to the ſatisfaction of the maſter or miſtreſs; upon the fact being made out to the ſatisfaction of a board of the governors at their next meeting; the governors might give ſuch woman, by way of encouragement, the ſum of two guineas.

At the firſt general meeting of the governors, a preſident, vice preſidents, and a treaſurer might be choſen by ballot. And alſo a committee of twenty-four governors † to manage and conduct the affairs of the hoſpital; who, with the preſident or vice preſidents, might meet weekly or oftener at the ſaid hoſpital. Nevertheleſs every governor ought to be at liberty to attend, and act, at ſuch weekly or other meeting, five to be a quorum.

A

† The appointment of a committee of fathers for life, to the total excluſion of every other governor, as propoſed by the *plan for a laundry*, appears to me falſe policy; for it is hard to conceive that any 24 gentlemen will accept of the fatigue of a government for life, where no profit can ariſe, and where it muſt neceſſarily break into their own domeſtic affairs, except ſuch as are fond of power indeed; a quality which certainly ought to exclude them; for in this caſe the management of the hoſpital might fall under a junto of very improper people. And the moſt reſpectable ſocieties have kept open the direction by frequent elections, witneſs the Bank, Eaſt India company, and all other ſocieties of rank and eſtimation: ſuch frequent elections, as it prevents the ill uſe men are too apt to make of power, ſo it is a check upon their conduct, and is preventive of inſolent behaviour.

A preſident, vice preſidents, treaſurer, and committee, as aforeſaid, as alſo the ſeveral officers of the hoſpital who ſhould rank above the degree of common ſervants, might be annually choſen by ballot, at the annual general meeting, by the majority of the governors preſent.

Any five or more of the committee or governors at their weekly or other meeting, might be empowered to call a general meeting of the governors as often as they ſhould judge it requiſite for the benefit of the hoſpital; but not leſs than four times a year; of which the annual general meeting ſhould be one; notice of which meetings ſhould be adverti ſed in the public papers three days at leaſt before.

At every annual general meeting, there ſhould be laid before the governors the general ſtate of the hoſpital reſpecting the year's receipts, and diſburſements, caſh in hand, &c. the number of repentant proſtitutes in the hoſpital; the names of thoſe admitted ſince the laſt annual meeting; the names of thoſe provided for, and the manner how, in the compaſs of the laſt year, and the time they continued in the hoſpital. And the ſame account of the committed proſtitutes; and the orphan and deſerted children of the Poor, and all other matters and things relating to the hoſpital. And an abſtract of the ſaid account might be

publiſhed in ſuch manner as the governors ſhould deem moſt ſatisfactory to the Public.

Three or more of the committee might, at their weekly or other meeting, go through the ſeveral wards of the proſtitutes and the children, to enquire into the conduct of the officers and ſervants towards the proſtitutes and children, and the behaviour of the proſtitutes and children themſelves, and inſpect into the goodneſs of the ſeveral proviſions and goods ſent, and ſuch other matters as ſhould occur to them reſpecting the good government and order of the charity, and report their obſervations to the board. And no perſon, excepting a governor, ought to be permitted to go into any proſtitute ward, in the intervals of the ſitting of the committee, except the chaplain, phyſician, ſurgeon, or apothecary, nor any governor but in the company of the chaplain or matron.

Thus have I endeavoured to model an inſtitution, which by a due mixture of mildneſs and ſeverity may redreſs an enormity which has long infeſted our ſtreets, and diſgraced our government; which has brought to the *grave* multitudes of the young by diſeaſe, and of the old by ſorrow. I have laid down rules of an hoſpital, in which penitence may be ſheltered, and corruption be reclaimed; where honeſt induſtry may be inculcated by inſtruction, or inforced by chaſtiſement: where thoſe who were once educated in the knowledge

ledge of religion, may gradually revive the principles which had been almoſt extinguiſhed by intercourſe with bad example, and by ſucceſſive viciſſitudes of riots and diſtreſs: and the light of inſtruction may be imparted to thoſe, whoſe minds have been hitherto clouded with ignorance, whom poverty has reſigned to guilt without a check, and whoſe intellectual powers have ſerved them to no other purpoſe than thoſe of fraud, and rapine, treachery and ſeduction.

From the reformation of guilt, if it can be happily effected, the proſpect goes on to its prevention in ſucceeding generations. The unpleaſing employment of puniſhing thoſe who have already tranſgreſſed the laws of virtue, will be changed to that of preſerving thoſe who muſt hereafter tranſgreſs, if charity does not ſnatch them out of the ſnares of poverty. If there are any who hate vice more than they love virtue, and in their zeal for vindictive juſtice, conſider all thoſe as unworthy of their favour whoſe miſery may be imputed to their crimes; yet not even theſe can refuſe compaſſion to them who are about to ſuffer by the crimes of others; whom the poverty or negligence of their parents expoſes to the temptation of hunger and nakedneſs; whom diſtreſs unavoidably mingles with robbers and profligates; and whoſe minds, untaught and unſettled, are open to the influence

ence of every tongue which perſwades them to relieve their wants at the expence of their innocence.

This charity is therefore recommended by every conſideration, civil and religious; whoever contributes to it, may ſolace his mind by reflecting, that his charity frees the ſtreets from annoyance, reſcues his ſervants and children from temptation, ſecures his goods from robbery, and his life from violence; and, what ought to prevail beyond all other motives, preſerves ſouls from everlaſting miſery.

The

The following letter, written in the year 1753, and from whence two quotations are made in the foregoing propoſals, by ſome accident made its appearance in the *London Chronicle*, in *January* laſt, and was republiſhed in *Lloyd's Evening Poſt*, ſoon after, but very incorrectly in the latter: ſeveral gentlemen of worth and candour, deſirous to have a copy, and not able to get one, have, ſince the printing of this pamphlet, ſollicited Mr. Welch to reprint, and annex it thereto entire. As the writer had not any copy, he has reprinted it from the *London Chronicle*; to the author of which paper he is, at leaſt, obliged, for his care in ſending it abroad correct.

This letter is annexed with ſomewhat the more propriety, as the author had unaccountably forgotten to mention bawdy-houſes among the nurſeries of robbers; and therefore none of the remarks contained in the letter are anticipated in the foregoing Eſſay, except in the quotations, which would not have been made, had there been then any deſign of publiſhing the letter itſelf. Theſe two pieces contain what the author's obſervation has ſuggeſted to him, concerning the cauſes and remedies of corruption among the lower orders of the people.

My Lord,

"IN obedience to your Grace's commands, ſignified to me by Mr. Sharpe, I moſt humbly preſent to you what has occurred to me,

me, in my confined ſphere of life, relating to the frequent murders and robberies ſo juſtly and univerſally complained of.

"The grand ſpring of the whole may perhaps be with ſome degree of juſtice aſcribed to the irreligion, idleneſs, almoſt total want of morals, and diſſoluteneſs of manners of the common people, together with the too remiſs execution of the laws in being, and the bad examples of too many in higher ſtations.

"*The unlimited wandering of the Poor of our own kingdom, and the uncontrouled importation of Iriſh vagabonds, are two great cauſes of the ſupply of rogues to this town.*

"The great diſproportion of the births and burials in this metropolis, ſufficiently demonſtrates the neceſſity of frequent ſupplies of ſervants and labourers from the country; and it is of the laſt importance that thoſe ſupplies be the honeſt and induſtrious: and ſome method to induce theſe to come, and reſtrain the idle and diſſolute, would be of great conſequence, not only to private families who muſt be ſupplied from this ſource, but to the police of the town. Indiſcriminate migrations are in their conſequences bad; for as the good ſervant may be here greatly improved and rendered more uſeful, ſo the mind enervated by bad principles and an idle diſpoſition, will ſoon improve in the arts of villainy, to the public nuiſance, and its own deſtruction. The motives of theſe two for coming

to

to London, are theſe: the firſt, deſirous to improve himſelf and his circumſtances, comes with an honeſt and laudable intention: the other, finding his continuance in the country unſafe, flies to town to conceal himſelf, and practiſe his knavery. It is therefore humbly apprehended, that a law ought to be made to prevent the ſervant and labourer from removing from their legal ſettlement, or other place of reſidence, without a certificate, deſcribing the name, age, ſtature, and perſon of the party, and that he or ſhe have behaved with honeſty and induſtry, and that their purpoſe is to go to London, or whatever place it be, to become ſervants or labourers: ſuch certificate to be ſigned either by a magiſtrate, miniſter, or churchwardens; and, to prevent ſuch certificates being counterfeited, to have the cheapeſt ſtamp poſſible; the counterfeiting of which ſhould receive the puniſhment of death, as for counterfeiting other ſtamps; and the counterfeiting of the names of thoſe by law impowered to ſign ſuch certificates, ſhould ſubject the parties to the puniſhment of rogues and vagabonds. And all ſervants or labourers, upon their paſſing through any city, town, or village, being thereunto required by any mayor, juſtice of the peace, or other officer, ſhould produce his or her certificate, and upon refuſal to produce it, or if upon examination it ſhall be

found that they have wandered without one, it ſhould be lawful for any juſtice of the peace, mayor, &c. to paſs ſuch parties back to their ſettlement, as rogues and vagabonds are paſſed.

"It is humbly conceived, that ſome method of this kind will be of the greateſt uſe to the honeſt and induſtrious ſervant and labourer, who will come with much greater confidence to aſk for employment ſo certified, than otherwiſe: and this may in time produce a valuable reformation in the behaviour of the ſervants and labourers in the country, eſpecially in the riſing generation; for when they ſee that good conduct will enable them to go where their intereſt or inclinations may lead, and a bad one will ſubject them to a kind of impriſonment in their own particular pariſh, it may ſo ſtrongly operate upon their minds, that the idleneſs and pilfering, ſo much complained of in the country, may totally ceaſe, and this town be no farther annoyed and peſtered by looſe and diſordered fellows from thence.

"The Iriſh imported into this kingdom of the lower claſs are thoſe who annually come to harveſt work; and, when that is over, return with the ſavings of their labour to their own country. Theſe are uſeful, faithful, good ſervants to the farmer; and as they are of real uſe to the kingdom, deſerve protection and encouragement. The others are a ſet of fellows

lows made deſperate by their crimes, and whoſe ſtay in Ireland being no longer ſafe, come to London to perpetrate their outrages: and it may be juſtly aſſerted, that moſt of the robberies, and the murders conſequent upon them, have been committed by theſe outcaſts of Ireland. To prevent theſe deſperado's coming here, will be to prevent many robberies. There is indeed a law which from the long non-execution of it, almoſt requires a republication: this enacts, That any maſter of a ſhip who ſhall import any vagabond, either from Ireland, or any of his Majeſty's iſlands or plantations, into this kingdom, ſhall be liable to a penalty of five pounds, and all coſts and charges ariſing from the apprehending and reconveying ſuch vagabonds. Might not certificates of the honeſt and induſtrious behaviour of Iriſh ſervants and labourers be made the neceſſary paſſport to be produced to the maſter of the ſhip before he preſume to admit the party on board, and the maſter of the ſhip produce it to the cuſtom-houſe officer at the port where he lands? Such certificate to be ſigned by the magiſtrates, &c. as before deſcribed; and the ſame power of demanding the ſight of it in every city, town, or village, through which ſuch labourer or perſon may paſs, upon pain of being ſent back as a rogue and vagabond.

"That London is the aſylum of thoſe rogues

and vagabonds, as well Irish as English, who are driven by their rogueries to seek shelter and concealment, is a truth beyond dispute; and when the houses to which they resort are considered, it is matter of wonder that a night passes without numbers of robberies and burglaries. There have, within a few years, arisen in the out-skirts of this town, a kind of traffic in old ruinous buildings, which the occupiers fill up with straw and flock beds, which they nightly lett out at two-pence for a single person, or three-pence a couple; nor is the least regard paid to decency. Men and women are promiscuously entertained; and in my searches after villains, I have found two or three couple in one room, who were perfect strangers to each other before the preceding night, then in bed together. Indeed I have seen debauchery in these houses carried farther than this; for sometimes two women have been in bed with one man, and two men with one woman. Four or five beds are often in one room; and what with the nastiness of these wretches, and their numbers, such an inconceivable stench has arose from them, that I have been hardly able to bear it the little time my duty required my stay. Spirituous liquors afford means of intoxication for the wretches here received; and the houses are kept open all night to entertain rogues and receive their plunder. Great

numbers

numbers of desperate villains have been taken out of these houses and executed. One woman occupies, in the parish of St. Giles's, near twenty of these houses. Black-boy Alley abounds with them; and they were the shelter of that dreadful gang of villains, who, about nine years since, robbed and wounded people at noon day. The bringing them to justice cost the Government great sums: and several of the civil officers were dreadfully wounded. Shoreditch has also numbers of them. A few years ago I assisted Mr. Henry Fielding in taking from under one roof upwards of seventy lodgers of both sexes. Suppose the number of these houses to be only two hundred; and compute only twenty persons to a house, the number is 4000; and, much I fear, not one fourth could obtain a just character of honesty and industry: the rest consisting of rotten whores, pick-pockets, pilferers, and others of more desperate denominations. What evils are the Public not liable to from such a villainous mixture as this?

"*Another cause of robberies I apprehend to be, the want of provision for maintaining and educating in good principles, and habits of industry, the children of the Poor.*

"The children of the Poor may be reduced to three classes;

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"1. The families of the Induſtrious, too numerous for their parents to maintain with decency, much leſs to provide for their education in good principles, or labour ſuitable to their tender age.

2. The children of the extravagant diſſolute Poor. Theſe are indeed miſerable; for ſo far are theſe wretches from taking proper care of their offspring, that they themſelves encourage and inſtruct their children in the pilfering trade, and are ready to receive whatever they ſteal.

"3. Orphans of the Poor, left deſtitute and friendleſs from the age of ſeven years to that of fourteen: unnoticed, and unrelieved by pariſh officers, they are left to wander under the cruel alternative of begging, ſtealing, or ſtarving.

"What other conſequences can ariſe to the Public, from children turned adrift in a town wicked as this, with minds untutored, and pinched by neceſſity, but a conſtant ſupply of pick-pockets, pilferers from ſhops, and inſtruments in the hands of greater villains to lie concealed in houſes till the dead of the night, and then let them in to plunder, perhaps murder an innocent family? Children thus bred up in ſloth and naſtineſs until ſeven years of age, at the time when education and habits of induſtry ſhould commence, become thieves by neceſſity; and, if they are bold and

nd daring, if they eſcape tranſportation, or being cut off by diſeaſe and rottenneſs, turn ſtreet robbers, and perhaps murderers. The ſacred name of God is no otherwiſe known to them, but by dreadful execrations; and religion is firſt taught them by the Ordinary of Newgate.

"If I am rightly informed, in our manufactory towns children ceaſe to be a burthen to their parents at leſs than ſeven years of age: and ſure little need be ſaid of the neceſſity and utility of ſome hoſpital to receive theſe innocents, educate and employ them: when inſtead of their being a dreadful nuſance to ſociety, as they now are, ſuch a foundation would prove a ſeminary of excellent ſervants to the Public.

"The offſpring of beggars are thieves and whores from both precept and example: the children of theſe wretches might be provided for as above; and happy would it be for the Public, if their ſturdy fathers and mothers were tranſported; and the objects of age and infirmity were confined to their proper ſettlements. The laws indeed are amply ſufficient; but laws unexecuted, and no laws, are the ſame thing. Were the magiſtrates of London, Weſtminſter, and Southwark, to unite in putting the laws into vigorous execution, and at one time to ſignify their reſolution, requiring thoſe beggars who were unable by

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age or infirmities to apply for paſſes to the officers of the reſpective pariſhes where they reſide by a certain day; and a declaration that thoſe found wandering and begging after that day, ſhould receive the utmoſt chaſtiſement of the law; and to affix their reſolutions in printed papers to the corners of the ſtreets, and ſpirit up their under-officers by giving the rewards the law allows for apprehending vagabonds; I will be bold to ſay, that not a beggar would be ſeen in our ſtreets; and poſſibly this example might be followed by the reſt of the kingdom, to the total ridding of ſociety of theſe burthens to our minds, as well as purſes. By this means thoſe who were able would be compelled to labour; real objects would be decently provided for at a tenth part of the expence they now are; and the whole abridgment to the begging tribe, would be the two incentives to begging, idleneſs and ſpirituous liquors."

"*Common proſtitutes are another cauſe of robberies.*

"Little needs be ſaid to prove that theſe wretches, who are lurking at every corner of our ſtreets, are an intolerable nuiſance: here I would be underſtood to mean, thoſe unhappy creatures who having neither a houſe to ſhelter them, nor protector to ſupport them, are under a neceſſity of wander-

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ing up and down the ſtreets to make a prey of the unwary apprentice, and intoxicated huſband. The bodies of theſe women are generally a complication of diſorders; their language made up of dreadful execrations; and their behaviour infamous beyond compariſon. Theſe wretches by their open proſtitution make ſin cheap. By theſe the apprentice is ſeduced to criminal converſe; which generally ends in pilfering from his maſter: detection follows, and if the maſter has the humanity to diſcharge him without proſecution, reputation being deſtroyed, it is odds but he aſſociates himſelf with the wretch who ſeduced him, who rarely fails to put him upon robbery for her ſupport. Theſe wretches cannot be ſaid only to corrupt youth, but like a virulent contagion precipitate the body into immediate deſtruction. Great numbers of theſe have been apprehended upon private ſearches, who have been ſent, ſome to Bridewell to hard labour, others, too diſeaſed for puniſhment, to hoſpitals: little good, if any, has aroſe from theſe; for upon being diſcharged from one, and cured at the other, having no means of recommendation, or honeſt method of ſupporting themſelves, neceſſity, united to a mind abandoned to debauchery, drives them to their former practices for ſupport. Hard indeed is that duty whoſe tendency is uſeleſs

ſeverity; and where puniſhment only prevents for the time it operates, but hardly ever produced one reformation. I have often wiſhed with an aching heart, that there was among the noble charities, which diſtinguiſh this age in hoſpitals for almoſt every human calamity, one inſtituted by the legiſlature to receive and provide labour for theſe true objects of compaſſion, as well as deteſtation. Poſſibly the making the army cloaths and linnen might be introduced, whereby theſe unhappy fellow-creatures might be reſcued from diſeaſe and miſery, and inſtead of being a nuiſance to the Public, become uſeful to it, and prevent the ruin of thouſands.

"*Gaming-houſes are another cauſe of robberies.*

"This is a truth too glaring to need any illuſtration. A remedy for this evil has at times taken up the attention of the legiſlature for two centuries: but ſo long as great men ſubſtitute falſe honour to defeat the laws of their country, and prefer the graſping at another man's fortune, while they neglect the true enjoyment of their own, it is no wonder that every intention of the legiſlature is fruſtrated. Happy would it be if gaming were confined to people of quality and fortune; for however they may uſe lit-

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tle arts againſt one another, there is no danger of their turning either highwaymen, or ſtreet robbers. But, alas! the example deſcends, and the minds of the common people are become infected; and here indeed gameſter and highwayman are almoſt ſynonimous. Poſſibly ſubjecting the keepers of gaming-houſes and their helpers, except ſuch as ſhould give information and evidence, to be tranſported as felons, and whipping at the cart's tail every perſon under the degree of a gentleman, proved to have gamed, might cure this accurſed practice.

" Under the article of gaming, a ſet of men denominated gamblers comes properly. Theſe are fellows who have ſubſiſted in this kingdom more than forty years; and uſing every trick and cheat to defraud the Unwary, have reigned, if I may ſo term it, almoſt with impunity. Theſe cheats attend at every avenue of the town, and at moſt of the fairs in the kingdom, where, by the arts of card-playing, pricking at the belt, falſe dice, ſelling pretended gold rings, and numberleſs other ſtratagems, they live upon the plunder of the Innocent, and that often to the total deſtruction of families. As theſe often aſſume the dreſs of gentlemen, by that diſguiſe they introduce themſelves to the gaming-tables of the Polite, and ſome thouſands of guineas have been

brought from the gaming-tables at the maſquerade by theſe gentry, by arts now well known. Theſe men are very numerous: and they are ſaid to be formed into a kind of body corporate, and to have their treaſurer and ſollicitor, whoſe buſineſs it is either to buy off proſecution, or procure falſe evidence to defeat a juſt one. Indeed, when the artful trade has failed, theſe nurſeries produce genteel highwaymen, who being learned and practiſed in every diſguiſe, are the hardeſt of all others to detect and bring to juſtice. The true reaſon of the long and ſucceſsful reign of gamblers in this kingdom is, that there is not a puniſhment in the law adequate to the offence: for if any of them is detected in their frauds, it is a bailable offence, being a miſdemeanor only: bail is eaſily got by the treaſurer; and before the time of trial comes, the proſecutor is reimburſed his loſs, and there ends the proſecution. But as they have various arts of diſguiſing themſelves, they are ſucceſsful twenty times to one that they are detected. Shopkeepers ſuffer prodigiouſly by being defrauded of their goods by falſe meſſages and other arts. Theſe fellows are ſo well known, that if the magiſtrates had a power to apprehend them, and, upon their being unable to prove that they ſubſiſt by lawful means,

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to commit them to hard labour as vagabonds till the ſeſſions, then to be dealt with according to their demerits; a ſtop would ſoon be put to theſe peſts to the harmleſs, unwary, honeſt country people and ſhopkeepers."

" *Accomplices in robberies who are admitted evidences, being left at liberty after the conviction of their comerades, is a great cauſe of a conſtant ſupply of robbers.*

" As robbing in the ſtreets of London is of all enterprizes the moſt bold and daring, gangs are frequently formed for this purpoſe; and I have known them fourteen or ſixteen in number. They divide themſelves into parties to rob, and are ready to unite to ſupport and procure the eſcape of their companions even with murder. Theſe gangs have been as conſtantly broke as they have got together: But to effect this benefit to the Public, it has unhappily been neceſſary to admit one or more of theſe villains as evidences, as well to get at the knowledge of the reſt, and their lurking-places, as by a diſcovery of the manner of the robberies to procure proſecutions, and legal evidences to bring them to juſtice. Theſe evidences, as ſoon as their accomplices are convicted, are diſcharged, and with this addition of infamy are turned into the ſtreets to remain the contempt and terror of ſociety. This ſort

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of reception from the Public never fails to induce the unhappy criminal to endeavour to raiſe a freſh gang, which he can eaſily do by reſorting to the houſes I have before deſcribed. He ſoon finds proper aſſociates; and there hardly paſſes a ſeſſion when one or more are not convicted, who perhaps the preceding one were evidences. A glaring inſtance of the truth of this obſervation I knew in the caſe of one Lewis, concerned in robbing Lady Albemarle: being admitted an evidence, he committed a robbery in Southampton fields within two hours of his diſcharge from Newgate, in company with one Campbell. Indeed I have obſerved that generally the evidence is the moſt notorious villain. Would it not be charity to the criminal, as well as beneficial to the Public, to ſend them, under ſome reſtraint, abroad for ſeven years? Their haunts and habits of idleneſs and vice might be broke, and a reformation rendered probable; which is impoſſible whilſt they ſtay in England. Indeed, theſe fellows are rarely intitled to the benefit of the ſtatute in its utmoſt extent; for they are generally apprehended before they are admitted evidences: whereas the ſtatute requires a voluntary ſurrender.

" *A better regulation of the priſons, by preventing*

venting debaucheries and all exceſſes; ſeparating murderers, ſtreet-robbers, burglars, and highwaymen, from any communication with thoſe committed for aſſaults, breaches of the peace, or petty thefts: and that the keepers of gaols ſhould ſubſiſt upon ſalaries, and not perquiſites, would be a great means of preventing the increaſe of robberies.

"In the preſent ſtate of our priſons, they are far from being that object of dread and terror they ought always to be: for the greater conſumption of wine and beer (the legiſlature by a late act having baniſhed ſpirituous liquors) made by a priſoner or his friends, the greater profit ariſes to the gaoler: and a good priſoner in the gaoler's language, is he, who has the greateſt means of exceſs, or who being a prodigy in villainy, numbers croud to ſee him; and he is exhibited to view for the profit of his keeper. Sometimes this furniſhes the felon with inſtruments to effect his eſcape. If this fails, perhaps he is by wine, &c. kept in a ſtate of continued intoxication, glories in his villainies to the time of his trial, and then determines to dye a hero. Thus the intention of public juſtice is defeated; for inſtead of being a dreadful example to deter others, his bold and daring behaviour renders him, as he from experience knows, the darling of the mob, and delight of his brethren in villainy,

lainy, who are more encouraged in their practices, by the conduct of one of theſe, than they are detert'd by that of twenty penitents.

I would here ſuggeſt a hint to prevent this daring behaviour of convicts going to and at the place of execution. The bodies of thoſe criminals are at the King's diſpoſal; if my Lords the Judges, upon paſſing ſentence, would mention this enormity, and give direction to the ſheriff in the hearing of the priſoners at the bar, that upon any improper conduct, either in the priſon after ſentence, or going to or at the place of execution, the body of ſuch criminal ſhould not be delivered to his friends for burial, but be conveyed to Surgeons Hall; this, I am ſatisfied, would produce outward penitence at leaſt, and cure this abſurd heroiſm. Our Bridewells, thoſe ſchools of labour, wiſely inſtituted as the proper puniſhment and cure of idleneſs, are, I fear, little better than nurſeries of debauchery. Labour and correction, the ſentence of the law, are never put into execution, except poverty be annexed to the crime; for, as I have before obſerved, the profit of the gaoler ariſing from the conſumption of liquors, it is abſurd to imagine that he will correct his friends. What neceſſity is there either for wine or ſtrong beer in priſons? The being debarred from means of exceſs and intempe-

temperance, might have ſome effect to render a priſon an object of terror to many, and bring thoſe to thinking, and a ſenſe of their crimes, who are ſent thither. A cook's ſhop, and a ſmall-beer tap, would furniſh the means of ſupport; and no farther ought it to go: and the keepers ſhould be paid ſalaries adequate to the truſt and danger they run, inſtead of ſubſiſting by perquiſites. As there is certainly a wide difference in offences, ſo is there in offenders: it is for this reaſon that thoſe committed for aſſaults, and petty offences, ſhould either not be ſent to the ſame priſon with the greater villains; or there ſhould be ſome barrier there to effectually ſeparate them. Such dreadful examples to minds perhaps juſt ſtept into iniquity, cannot fail to complete their ruin.

" *The better enlightning and watching the public ſtreets would render robbery very unſafe.*

" Light and a watch are the greateſt enemies to villains. Excepting ſome local acts of parliament, the lightning of the ſtreets ſtands upon a ſtatute of William and Mary, which, as it makes no diſtinction between perſons of great propertyand thoſe of narrow circumſtances, requiring every houſekeeper to put out a light every night from dark to twelve o'clock from Michaelmas to

Lady-Day, unleſs they contribute to public lamps to be ſet out by two juſtices of the peace; but as there is no method preſcribed how the charge of public lamps is to be defrayed, and the intermediate time between Lady-Day and Michaelmas is totally unprovided for, and at the time that ſtatute was made ſtreet robberies were unknown, it ſeems neceſſary that a better proviſion ought to be made; and this is the ſenſe of the legiſlature, as many pariſhes have obtained acts of parliament for this purpoſe, and for providing an able and ſufficient watch. But ſtill the out-pariſhes, where the greateſt danger from robbers and burglars may juſtly be apprehended, have only the unexecuted ſtatute above-mentioned for lighting the ſtreets, and the ſtatute of Wincheſter for watching, and this only provides, "that watch and ward "ſhall be kept from Aſcenſion-Day to Mi-"chaelmas from ſun to ſun." Indeed, cuſtom, eſtabliſhed by neceſſity, has prevailed in this town for a nightly watch all the year, and this cuſtom has introduced a pecuniary compound for perſonal ſervice between the conſtable and the inhabitant; and this from time is grown into a kind of rate, and a ſum demanded by the conſtable quarterly to defray the expence of paying his beadle and the watchmen he hires. The total want of lights in the out-parts, and the

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inſufficiency of the watch, is a grievance greatly and juſtly complained of; and it is hoped a general law will provide for an effectual light and able watch for the ſecurity of the night, as moſt of the ſtreet robberies have been perpetrated in the dark out-ſkirts of the town, through which the coaches of perſons of quality and others muſt neceſſarily paſs.

" Some methods of rendering low mechanics, ſervants, and labourers in this town, known, would be of the utmoſt conſequence to the good government of it, as by this means it might be aſcertained where to find them, and how, and in what manner, their time is employed. In a place ſo extenſive, its inhabitants ſo numerous, various and fluctuating, it ſeems almoſt impoſſible to fix this with any tolerable certainty: but are not the inhabitants of ſmall towns and large villages known, and may not this town be portioned out into diſtricts not exceeding thirty houſes, and officers annually choſen under the denomination of *conſervators*, or other title, under whoſe care ſuch diſtricts might be placed; and proper books of entry made of the names and family of each inhabitant. Sure the charges would not be difficult to raiſe. Such inhabitants may be forbid under ſevere penalties, to receive any lodger, ſervant, or labourer, as a lodger, until ſuch labourer

bourer or ſervant has been produced before ſuch conſervator, and entered into ſuch book, with ſome particulars, as, where he came from, whether he was in work, and where; if not, what means of ſubſiſtance he had; and if it ſhould appear that the perſon applying can give no ſatisfactory account of him or herſelf, ſuch conſervator might have power to deliver the party to a conſtable, who ſhould convey him to a juſtice of the peace to be dealt with as the law directs.

There are many other things neceſſary for better regulating a town vaſt as this is; poſſibly time may ſhew it neceſſary that a body of laws ſhould be enacted, different as the vices of this town are from thoſe in the country: but this is a ſubject too great for my humble ſtation. I ſhall eſteem myſelf happy if I have furniſhed any hint of uſe to the Public, in the ſervice of which your Grace is ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed. I am, with all poſſible humility, &c.

FINIS.